

REMARKS

Claims 1-6 are the only active claims pending in this application. The foregoing separate sheets marked as "Listing of Claims" shows all the claims in the application, each with an indication at its first line showing the claim's current status.

The Office Action rejects claims 1 -6 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,993,360 ("Plahte"). Office Action at ¶¶ 1-2.

Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection, as Plahte lacks at least the "extension telephone connecting means" element of base claim 1, and Plahte lacks at least the "extension telephone connecting" step of base claim 4. Plahte therefore cannot anticipate any of Applicant's claims. Applicant submits that Plahte is one exemplar within the prior art identified in the Background of Applicant's disclosure.

Applicant's system and method authenticate a portable information equipment (such as that of a temporary worker) and, depending on the result of the authentication, connect the portable information equipment to a telephone extension system through a VPN, and then connect the authenticated portable information equipment, via Voice Over Internet Protocol (VoIP), to a telephone extension on the telephone extension system.

Applicant's base claim 1 includes, in combination with its other elements, its recited "extension telephone connecting means." The "extension telephone connecting means" is a means-plus-function element under 35 U.S.C. § 112, 6th paragraph; it clearly defines a function - without structural limitations. The function of this element is: connecting the portable information equipment to the extension telephone system through a virtual private network (VPN), the connecting including an authentication,

For even further clarity, Applicant has amended claim 1 to additionally recite the authentication and the connecting, and not connecting, being based on the authentication as:

wherein the connecting performs an authentication of the portable information equipment and, based on the authentication, selects between connecting and not connecting the portable information equipment to the VPN

Claim 1, currently amended, at lines 6-9.

Applicant submits Plahte teaches *nothing* within the meaning of the “connecting” and “authentication” functions recited by the claim 1 “extension telephone means for connecting” element.

Plahte therefore *cannot* embody this element.

The Examiner’s stated position is that Plahte’s “MBX server 110 connects PDA SmartPhone 108 to PBX 101” embody the “extension telephone connecting means,” citing Plahte at col. 1, lines 37-38 and col. 6, lines 49-52, as disclosing performing the claim 1 defined function of connecting, through the VPN, “after authentication through a virtual private network.” Office Action at ¶ 2, lines 6-8.

Applicant respectfully responds that the Examiner’s stated position does not comport with Plahte’s disclosure.

Applicant submits that Plahte’s PDA SmartPhone 108 is disclosed as simply connected to the PBX 101 through “data path 152.” (Referring to Plahte’s Fig. 1, the data path 152 is a “GSM Network 106,” “SMA Gateway 116, Internet 114, Router 112, and MBX server 110.) Plahte describes communications from the PDA SmartPhone 108 to the MBX server 110. None include an “authentication” of the PDA SmartPhone 108 and a connecting of the PDA SmartPhone 108 to the MBX server 110 based on such an authentication.

Plahte, at col. 12, line 14 through col. 13, line 45 describes various “outgoing” calls from the PDA SmartPhone 108 through the MBX 110. *None* include anything within the broadest reasonable meaning of “authentication” performed in connecting the PDA SmartPhone 108 to the MBX 100.

Applicant further submits that the Examiner is in error in citing Plahte’s col. 1, lines 37-38, as a disclosure of the claim 1 “authentication” or an “authentication” related to any “connecting” to a PBX.

Applicant submits that Plahte's col. 1, lines 37-38 is a general statement, in its Background, that "*call screening and monitoring*" as a general function of a PBX. Applicant respectfully submit that Plahte's reference to functions of "call screening and monitoring" of a PBX is *not* subject matter within the broadest reasonable meaning of an "authentication" related to anything, much less an "authentication" performed in "connecting" to the PBX.

Applicant further submits that the Examiner is in error in citing Plahte's col. 6, lines 51-60, as disclosing the claim 1 "authentication" or the claim 1 "authentication" related to any "connecting."

Applicant respectfully submits that Plahte's col. 6, lines 51-60 is an excerpt from Plahte's description of an "Automatic Use of Pre-Programmed PBX Short Numbers." Applicant respectfully submits that the cited description of an "Automatic Use," read together with Plahte's entire disclosure, does *not* describe, teach or otherwise disclose a function within the plain meaning of "connecting and its included "authentication" recited by the claim 1 "'extension telephone means for connecting" element.

Claim 4, as amended, recites method steps, *e.g.*, "connecting" and "authenticating," that re substantively equivalent to the recited function of the claim 1 "means for connecting" element. Applicant therefore respectfully submits that Plahte lacks at least the claim 4 "connecting" step, for at least the reasons Applicant presents above that Plahte lacks the claim 1 "means for connecting."

Applicant respectfully requests, for the reasons identified above, that the rejection of claims 1 and 4 be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Claims 2-3 and 5-6 depend from claims 1 and 4, respectively, and are therefore patentable over Plahte for at least the reasons presented above.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request that claims 1 - 6 be allowed, and that the application be passed to issue.

Should the Examiner find the application to be other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the local telephone number listed below to discuss any other changes deemed necessary in a telephonic or personal interview. Please charge any deficiencies in fees and credit any overpayment of fees to Attorney's Deposit Account No. 50-2041.

Respectfully submitted,



Michael E. Whitham

Reg. No. 32,635

Whitham, Curtis, Christofferson and Cook, P.C.
11491 Sunset Hills Road, Suite 340
Reston, VA 20190
Tel. (703) 787-9400, Fax. (703) 787-7557